

IN THE CLAIMS

The text of all claims under examination is submitted, and the status of each is identified. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended): A process of dewatering an aqueous suspension in which the aqueous suspension is sewage sludge comprising

a) dosing the suspension with a flocculating amount of a first flocculant in which the first flocculant is a cationic acrylamide organic polymer of a molecular weight of at least one million to form a thickened suspension,

b) adding and mixing into the thickened suspension formed in step a) a dewatering amount of a second flocculant in which the second flocculant is a water-soluble or water swellable polymer formed from 50 to 100% by weight methyl chloride quaternary ammonium salt of dimethylamino ethyl (meth)acrylate and 0 to 50% by weight acrylamide of intrinsic viscosity between 4 and 10 dl/g, wherein the second flocculant is distributed throughout the thickened suspension of part b) using mixing equipment.

and

c) subjecting the thickened suspension to mechanical compression dewatering to form a cake, characterised in that the second flocculant of step b) is mixed into the suspension in the form of (i) substantially dry polymer particles having a diameter of at least 50 microns or (ii) an aqueous composition comprising dissolved or hydrated polymer having a polymer concentration of at least 2% by weight.

2. (cancelled).

3. (currently amended): A process according to claim 1 in which the mechanical compression dewatering employs an apparatus selected from the group consisting of belt press, filter press, screw press and centrifuge.

4. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1 in which the second flocculant is in the form of an aqueous composition comprising dissolved or hydrated polymer having a polymer concentration between 2 and 5% by weight.

5. (cancelled).

6. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1 in which the second flocculant is formed from at least 80% by weight cationic monomer or monomers.

7-11. (cancelled):

12. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1 in which the second flocculant is introduced into the suspension in form of a slurry in a liquid.

13. (original): A process according to claim 12 in which the liquid is polyethylene glycol.

14. (cancelled):

15. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1 in which the substantially dry particles have a diameter of 50 microns to 3000 microns.

16. (previously presented): A process according to claim 15 in which the substantially dry particles have a diameter from 50 and 1000 microns.

17. (cancelled):

18. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, in which the first flocculant molecular weight ranges from 5 million up to 30 million.